

# **CWAC March 6, 2010**

## **MUCC Headquarters Lansing, MI**

Meeting called to order by Chair Todd Alofs @ 9:02 AM

Introduced new members; James Bahr, Rob Kobel, Scott Berg, and Andy Parmley.

Introduction of CWAC members, Waterfowl workgroup, and guests.

M/S Jim Carpenter/Paul Connor to accept August 2009 minutes. Motion Passed

18 members present: James Bahr, Rob Kobel, Scott Berg, Andy Parmley, Trent Bellinger, Paul Conner, Ralph Kant, Pat Murray, Jim Bias, Faye Williams, Terry Laymon, Steve Wycoff, John Kurkowski, Bill Roth, Bud Dankers, Todd Alofs, John Huffman, Jim Carpenter

MDNRE: Joe Robison, Dave Luukkonen, Mike Bailey, Barb Avers, Russ Mason, Ernie Kafkas, Nik Kalejs, Jennifer Kleitch, Brian Piccolo, Dan Kennedy, and Dave Shaw.

Joe Robison presented CWAC goals & guidelines. ***Citizen Waterfowl Advisory Committee mission:*** Provide feedback to the DNR - Wildlife Division on existing and proposed waterfowl regulations and wetland management issues. CWAC members must present views and concerns which represent stakeholders from their areas of the state and disseminate information learned at CWAC meetings back to those stakeholders.

Russ Mason gave a Wildlife Division update. Went over new DNRE structure. Discussed new permitting process for nuisance Canada goose removal. Talked about staffing levels under reduced budget. May be reorganizing the DNRE to reflect new staffing levels and budgets. Working on strategic plan, hope to have completed by August. Moving to “featured species approach” to management of state lands.

### **Season at a glance;**

Barb Avers started with opening day bag results. UP slightly lower than last year, but more mallards. South zone had better results than 08.

Andy Parmley (west UP) slower than last year, few mallards until late in season.

Trent Bellinger (mid Mich) Birds moved due to changes in habitat conditions, had good duck hunting in UP.

Jim Carpenter (Traverse City) Good opener. Overall pretty good season. Goose was slow until late. More divers in smaller lakes.

Paul Conner (Harsens Island) Youth hunt down, early goose better as well as regular goose. Duck about same as last year with 1000 more hunter trips. About average.

Ralph Kant. Same as Paul. Lake St.Clair water levels up. Stable weather hurt harvest. Diver numbers in December very high.

Pat Murray (west Mi) Good early, then slow due to weather. Poor goose hunting due to late corn harvest.

Rob Kobel (west Mi) Slow due to weather. Goose slow also due to weather. OK opener then slow. Late season not so good.

Jim Bias (UP) OK season lots of teal early. OK early goose. Few mallards. Scaup down, probably moved late.

Scott Berg Early goose spotty. UP opener good (Baraga area). Weather hurt duck & goose hunting. Late opener good, second day a bust.

Jim Bahr (Sag Bay/SE Mi) Opener good mixed bag. November slow. Early goose tough, not to good.

Faye Williams (Central UP) Decent opener for regular goose, then nothing. Duck hunting was down.

Terry Laymon (DU) Good early goose (overall state), Overall an OK Season.

Steve Wycoff (MUCC) Delayed migration with good opener. Mediocore season.

John Kurkowski (Montcalm area) Early goose down. Birds scattered over large area. Ducks about average early, migration was late. Total goose population down.

Bill Roth (Sag Bay) Early goose OK, regular season slow. Few mallards, opener OK then slow. Had divers on inland lakes. Had sea ducks & eiders by Charity Is. Divers around late. Slightly better than 08.

Bud Dankers (Shiawassee River SGA) poor early goose, Regular season started OK, Nov was real slow. Birds showed late Nov. Late season slow but birds where there.

Todd Alofs (west Mi) Early goose OK, Regular duck slow start, late Oct a few new birds, late Nov saw birds a few new birds. Major migration after season closed.

John Huffman (SE Mi) Same as rest of state. Corn came off on schedule. Good early & regular goose. Youth hunt good. Lots of teal & woodys. Opener OK then slowed down due to lack of new birds. Late was great was if you could get out. Hunting was tough. Request for early teal season, overall timing was good for season dates.

Ernie Kafkas; Local goose production down, duck production up. Weather was mild, little time lost due to ice. Harsens peak Nov 20 w/30,000+ birds. Diver numbers up, but

tough to hunt due to mild weather. Average at best for ducks. Early goose OK. Late goose good early, then declined.

Nik Kalejs (Muskegon) Wet Oct. woody hunting good, mallards OK. November slow. Overall similar to 08. Late season spotty. If you were in right spot you did OK. Goose similar to 08. Goose population about same as last year. Large number of adult birds harvested. Allegan good, Muskegon down. Late goose variable.

Jennifer Kleitch Production numbers good (NE MI). Generally hunting same as rest of State. Banded wood ducks (Russ shot them).

Brian Piccolo (Shiawassee SGA) Weather hurt harvest. Brood counts west Sag Bay down, East Bay up. NP had poor year, Fish Point harvest way up, Harvest at Shiawassee average. Goose production down at Shiawassee.

Joe Robison (SE MI) Early goose numbers appeared to be down, production down due to a cold wet spring. It was a very good youth hunt. Very good October hunting, November was VERY SLOW! Erie Shooting Club (Ohio/MI border) had one of their best seasons. A few comments about getting access to hunt geese during the Firearm deer season being open. Some avid goose hunters would like the regular goose season later outside the Firearm deer season. Late goose season was very good around Southeast MI.

Mike Bailey Spent a week sunbathing in Canada (and shot geese).

Dan Kennedy S-Central Noted corn harvest was behind normal. Working on Maple River State Game Area improvements.

Russ Mason Looking forward to next year.  
Overall few complaints over season structure, just weather not cooperating.

Dave Shaw Smaller broods of geese. Had good mallard hunting in flooded cropland (Due to rains). November slow. Diver numbers up along west side of state (winter counts).

Flyway wide harvest patterns were below expectations. Indiana & Ontario were average. Some States were very poor. Sub-arctic goose breeding success was down. More adult birds were in this year's harvest.

Barb Avers handed out DVD on restoring wetlands. To be shared with anyone interested.

Joe Robison presented the 2009 Canvasback Survey; Done in November (Nov 5) over Saginaw Bay, Lake St Clair, Detroit River and Lake Erie. One of the largest counts ever done (since 1974). Large rafts of birds on Canadian side of Lake St Clair.

Midwinter waterfowl survey: Conducted 1<sup>st</sup> week in January Count numbers up overall, due mostly to increases in diving ducks. Puddle ducks where down, as where geese. Lots of oldsquaw and scoters.

Dave Shaw (enforcement) Discussed violations both statewide and flyway wide. Changes from previous years: baiting seems to up.

Barb/Managed waterfowl Area Operations

Discussed changes to operations in the 08 season. The changes seemed to work well overall. Not too many issues arose.

Dave Luukkonen Discussed early season recommendations.

Gave an overview of Flyway Council recommendations for MI. Changes need to be approved by USFWS. Duck stamp sales show an increase in stamp sales for southern states and a decline in northern tier states.

MI sold 42,000 duck stamps previous year.

M/S Faye Williams/Scott Berg to open Regular Canada Goose season in the UP on Sept 16, to run thru Oct 30 (45 days). 18 in favor. Motion Passed

M/S James Bias/Bill Roth to hold the youth waterfowl hunt Sept. 18-19, 2010. 18 in favor. Motion Passed.

M/S John Kurkowski/Bill Roth to lower early goose limit to 3 birds per day (early season only).

3 in favor 14 opposed 1 abstain Failed

M/S Ralph Kandt/Bud Dankers to prohibit spinning wing decoys (except wind powered) during regular waterfowl season on managed waterfowl areas by permit. 5 in favor 11 opposed 2 abstain Failed

M/S John Kurkowski/Paul Conner to prohibit spinning wing decoys (except wind powered) at the SRSGA for 3 years as an experiment. 14 in favor 2 opposed 2 abstain Motion Passed

Scott Berg noted for the record that this could be detrimental to waterfowl hunting.

Barb discussed Great Lakes Restoration Initiative and repairs at managed waterfowl areas, wetlands restorations, and invasive species.

Barb brought up the mute swan policy. Plan on forming a committee to look at options for control.

Terry Laymon volunteered

M/S Jim Bias/Jim Carpenter to send Terry Laymon to represent CWAC on the mute swan committee.

Will communicate with CWAC via e-mail.

Mike Bailey on resident geese. Will be charging to relocate birds in future.

Joe Robison gave John Kurkowski a certificate & gifts for his service on CWAC.

M/S Ralph Kandt/Faye Williams to hold next meeting at the RAM Aug.7. 5 in favor 11 opposed 1 abstain Failed

M/S/ John Huffman, Pat Murray to hold meeting in Bay City, Mi Aug. 7. 13 in favor 2 opposed (Site to be determined.)

MS Jim Carpenter/Ralph Kandt to adjourn at 3:22 PM

Respectfully submitted;  
Bud Dankers

CWAC Recording Secretary